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ABSTRACT

According to its president, Marcel Pepin, the World Confederation of Labour (W.C.L.) offers man a way to follow his ideals of fraternity and solidarity within an intellectual framework open to discussion and world-wide point of view. The W. C. L. has tried in recent years to become in particular a mouthpiece for workers in underdeveloped countries. This review is comprised of brief reports on recent W.C.L. activities (th fight against apartheid, participation in UNESCO and in conferences on immigration and amnesty, W.C.L. press releases and news of interventions); information on international trade federations; brief reports of living and working conditions for laborers in 13 countries of five continents; and a final section titled "Documents," containing four lengthier pieces: a description of the effects of repressive government on living and working conditions of workers in Brazil; a review of the book "The Multinationals Which Control Us;" an account of a strike in Belgium; and a history of the South African "Bantustan" Policy. (AJ)

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SUMMARY

EDITORIAL :

- Marcel Pepin addresses the workers. 1

W.C.L. :

- Apartheid. 2
- UNESCO 3
- Immigration 4
- Against torture. 4
- Press releases. 5

INTERNATIONAL TRADE FEDERATIONS

- World Federation of Non-Manual Workers 7
- Latin American Federation of Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Leather 7

AFRICA

- 4th Regional African Conference of the I.L.O. 8

LATIN AMERICA

- CHILE : The Ambassador of Sweden. 9
- URUGUAY : 1,400 workers dismissed. 9

NORTH AMERICA

- CANADA : List of disputes. 10

ASIA

- The BATU Congress. 11

EUROPE

- The European programme for social action. 12
- ENGLAND : Teachers' pay 13
  Vauxhall Motors. 13
- SPAIN : Export of labour. 14
- FRANCE : The strike of 6th December 14
- GERMANY : Foreign workers. 15
- GREECE : The Purists. 15
- SWITZERLAND : Cost of living subsidies. 16
- Turkey : The problem of torture. 16

DOCUMENTS

- After "Brazil-Export 73". 17
- "The Multinationals which control us". 18
- The AKZO- strike. 23
- The South African "Bantustan" policy. 24

SPECIAL

- The WCL and the ICFTU discussed the "Multinational Companies". 28

ON THE EVE OF THE NEW YEAR, 1974,

MARCEL PEPIN, THE PRESIDENT OF THE W.C.L.,

ADDRESSES THE WORKERS.

The idea of international trade union life took root in Europe more than a century ago, although international trade unionism itself did not become a reality for European trade union associations until much later. I would also say that international trade unionism, even today, is basically still a question of spreading the ideas of human solidarity between workers and of collaboration between workers of different races and cultures. These ideas have spread throughout the world and have rallied trade union organizations in other continents.

These general ideas of international solidarity and collaboration can today be found in three great trade union blocs each gathering together trade union bodies from different countries in accordance with their economic and political allegiances. They are the trade unions of the communist bloc, the trade unions of the Western bloc and a third bloc representing those groups with a critical but open attitude towards the two large blocs.

The World Confederation of Labour, independent of the two great economic camps, has preferred from the very beginning to represent those people who place the dignity, responsibility and freedom of man above blind loyalty to a system.

I do not think one can deny that there is a need in the international trade union movement for this third option which, even if it does offer the workers a difficult path, which is nevertheless a little cautious itself at times, still offers man a way to follow his ideals of fraternity and solidarity within an intellectual framework open to discussion and free to examine the workers' problems from a human and world-wide point of view.

In addition, the W.C.L. has tried in recent years to become in particular a mouth-piece for workers in the underdeveloped countries, as in the past it opened its doors to workers in certain industrialized countries who, for ideological or cultural reasons, do not wish to be cast in the same trade union mould, carrying with it, as it does, a strong cultural influence from economically and politically powerful countries with great ambitions.

Consequently, as a direct result of the very nature of our organization, there is a great diversity of problems within the W.C.L. which, in other trade union organizations, would be hidden under the cloak of uniformity.

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It is exactly because the W.C.L. puts the emphasis on certain principles that our action is sometimes seen as being more a question of "pious" words and ideas than concrete action.

However, if the W.C.L. remains a free spirit on the economic and political level, ie. having no direct or indirect protection from any great powers, its participation in concrete action can nevertheless be significant, and could become even stronger provided that we put more thought and decision into our action.

During the historic struggle of 200,000 workers in Quebec from the public services and ancillary organizations, W.C.L. solidarity action was not without its weight and influence.

Quebec, the largest of the ten provinces of Canada, whose surface area is three times as large as that of France, is mostly inhabited by French-speaking people who have been fighting for centuries to preserve their proud culture and traditions in a country and a continent more or less completely controlled by the economic and political structure of the United States.

Without the powerful intervention of the W.C.L. in this great labour dispute, the cause of the workers of Quebec would have had little impact on the international scene and these workers themselves would never have been fortunate enough to feel the existence of international fraternity and solidarity. I at least concluded from this that we must strive towards closer involvement, in our regular activities, in the problems of those who, for various reasons, find it difficult to make their voice heard or hear, in their own turn, the voice of fellow workers throughout the world.

Our mission in this respect may well not have a fashionable impact on the international scene, but it is nevertheless a human mission which we at the W.C.L., even at the expense of the difficulties involved, must carry out energetically.

W.C.L.

The W.C.L. applauds the creation of the Panafrican Trade Union Committee for the fight against Apartheid

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The Panafrican Trade Union Conference met in Nairobi on the 1st of December 1973, on the occasion of the 4th I.L.O. Regional Conference, gathering together all the delegates from the national and continental trade union organizations.

After studying the ways and means of implementing the resolution adopted by the International Trade Union Conference against Apartheid held in Geneva on the 15th and 16th June 1973, it was decided to form : a "Panafrican Committee for Co-ordination and Trade Union Action against Apartheid".

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Gilbert Pongault, the General Secretary of the Panafrican Workers' Congress (P.A.W.C.), the African regional organization of the W.C.L., was unanimously elected as Permanent Secretary of this committee.

His task, with the support of the General Secretary of the O.U.A. (Organization for African unity) and in collaboration with the secretariat of the OATUU (Organization for African Trade Union Unity), will be to promote and co-ordinate the actions of trade union organizations to rid the continent of apartheid, colonialism and all other forms of racial discriminations.

The Panafrican Committee for Co-ordination and Trade Union Action against Apartheid is composed of delegates representing the following countries : Algeria, Egypt, Lybia, Senegal, Liberia, Guinea, Nigeria, Zaire, Congo (Brazzaville), Kenya, Zambia, Tanzania, Madagascar.

The committee will also include a delegate from the autonomous trade union organizations in the countries which are the victims of apartheid (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, etc...).

The newly elected Permanent Secretary, Gilbert Pongault, will, at the request of the committee, pay a systematic visit to the trade union organizations to help set up national committees in the fight against apartheid.

The World Confederation of Labour enthusiastically applauds the creation of the Panafrican Committee for Co-ordination and Trade Union Action against Apartheid and congratulates comrade Gilbert Pongault on this nomination, which bears witness to the confidence which the African trade union organizations have in him, thus underlining the efforts he has made for many long years in the service of a dynamic and effective Panafrican trade union movement.

The W.C.L. wholeheartedly supports this initiative by the African trade union organizations, which will play an important part in the fight which the W.C.L. has always been engaged in for the respect of the rights of man and hopes that it will bring about a victory over apartheid, and give way to justice and freedom for all citizens of Southern Africa.

At the 14th General Conference of UNESCO, of Non-Governmental Organizations (N.G.O.), the W.C.L. was re-elected to the Permanent Committee - Mrs Simone Troisgros was elected President by a large majority.

The 14th General Conference of the International Non-Governmental Organizations was held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris from the 6th to the 9th November 1973, involving 272 NGO's of A and B status at UNESCO. The secret ballot for the 15 organizations to be called to make up the Permanent Committee for the period 1973 - 1975 led to the W.C.L. being re-elected. Before this, the Conference had already elected the new President to take care, for two years, in the general interest of all concerned, of NGO representation, contacts with the Director General of UNESCO, together with the co-ordination of the work of the Permanent Committee and its Secretariat.

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The President, elected by a large majority, is to be Mrs Simone Troisgros. If the President is elected in the role of arbitrator from a point of view of personality, we are pleased to note with satisfaction that during this 14th General Conference of the NGO's the Presidency has been bestowed upon a person who is well-known for the part she has played within the French and international trade union movements.

According to the directives from UNESCO concerning relations with the NGO's having a consultative status of A or B, these are to meet, in agreement with the Director General, at a Conference every two years at the UNESCO headquarters in order to study the problem of their co-operation with UNESCO, to improve co-operation between Organizations having common interests, to gather in information and, by means of collective consultation, present opinions and suggestions on both long and short term UNESCO programmes.

Our sincere congratulations and best wishes for excellent work to Simone Troisgros.

The second trade union Conference on Immigration in Istambul.

The second trade union Conference on immigration was held in Istambul from the 6th to the 10th of November 1973, with 21 trade union organizations taking part, representing 7 immigrant countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Italy) and 7 host countries (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Sweden, France). The W.C.L. and its European Organization were represented by Rino Di Bernardo.

The first Conference on immigration, which concerns some 11 million workers, was held in Belgrade in April 1972. The outcome of this Conference was the creation of a Committee charged with preparing the Istambul Conference, where three subjects in particular were dealt with :

1) Action towards the application and development of normal working standards;
2) The policy of professional training and the education of immigrant children;
3) Strengthening the participation of immigrant workers in the trade unions of the host countries and developing co-operation between the trade unions of the immigrants' countries and those of the host countries.

The various delegations in Istambul considered that the struggle against all forms of discrimination and xenophobia was the essential duty of all trade unions together at international level. The democratic action by trade unions among the workers, whatever their origin, must overcome all the causes of discord and result in complete solidarity between immigrant and national workers.

The Istambul Conference showed definite progress on that in Belgrade and immediately decided to call a third Conference.

"Amnesty International" at its recent Paris Conference, condemns the perverted practice of torture institutionalized in various parts of the world as a means of ensuring political stability. The W.C.L. actively took part in the Conference.

"Amnesty International" has found it necessary to draw the attention of the world to the pestilence of torture. For this reason, a conference for the abolition of torture was held under the auspices of "Amnesty International" on 10th and 11th December, 1973 in Paris, where, 25 years ago the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations, had given

birth to the hope for a new, more humane world which was unable to keep its promise. Originally planned for the UNESCO building, the Conference had to be held in another building. It would appear that several member countries of UNESCO exerted great pressure on the organization's management not to give official support to this conference by allowing it to be held on its premises. The reasons for this are unknown. All that can be said, as "Amnesty International"'s Chairman Mr. Sean McBride, pointed out when opening the Conference, is that it is surprising that UNESCO had not taken into account the resolution condemning torture made by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 2nd November, 1973. It is even more difficult to understand UNESCO's attitude in refusing to have the "Amnesty International" Conference held on its premises when one learns that, on the evening of the day the Conference for the abolition of torture opened at the Tour Olivier-des-Serres, UNESCO was commemorating with great panache the 25th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 5 of which deals with the practice of torture.

Be that as it may, "Amnesty International" proclaimed in Paris in the face of the whole world and its governments that torture is far from being a vestige of the past, on the contrary, there exists the art of torture; torture has become internationalized and the perverted practice of setting up torture as a means of political stabilization continues to develop in many countries and, although no government recognizes the practice of torture, it still exists, and in today's world, torture is practised scientifically, and systematically.

This Conference, in which the W.C.L. was represented by J. Insausti, S. Troisgros and J. Bourhis, adopted a series of resolutions concerning the identification of those persons and institutions responsible for torture, socio-economic and political factors affecting torture, the international, regional and national legal principles used by torture and the physiological effects on the victims of torture and the implication of doctors in the practice. Three hundred delegates, including a large number of legal men and doctors from 25 different countries, took part in this "Amnesty International" Conference which has decided to lead a successful world campaign for the elimination of the present epidemic of systematic torture and to effectively draw attention to article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, courage and resolution will be needed, not only by "Amnesty International", but also by all those who are prepared to help it triumph over the bloody obstination of the killers of the Sao Paulo Death Squad, in Brazil, the Greek, Spanish or Portuguese police, the Chilian soldiers and all those who have made torture, imprisonment or murder methods of government.

Press releases and interventions of the W.C.L. and other international organizations to the I.L.O.

- Following the execution in Morocco of 15 oppenents of the regime, who were condemned to death by the Kenitra Military Tribunal, the W.C.L. sent out an official Press statement on the 11th of November 1973 to the effect that the procedures used by Morocco in executing any opponents of the regime constitute organized crime by the State.

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In a statement on the 13th of November 1973, the W.C.L. expressed its opposition to any form of aid being given by international institutions to the military regime in Chile. It referred in this respect to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The W.C.L. stressed the fact that a year ago President Allende protested to the United Nations Tribune about the "economic blockade" which was depriving his country of commercial and financial aid, with particular reference to aid or loans from the above-mentioned financial institutions.

- Following the Greek students' and workers' uprising against the Papadopoulos regime, destroyed by the army in a blood-bath, and the seizure of power by the new military clique which drove out Papadopoulos, the W.C.L., its European Organization and the Greek Committee of the W.C.L., expressed their solidarity with the Greek people's fight for liberation. They called on all democratic governments to condemn the crimes being perpetrated by the military and to banish the junta from the community of democratic peoples of Europe and the world. The General Secretary of the W.C.L., Jean Brück, also appealed to the Director General of the I.L.O. to condemn the repression by the Greek government of hundreds of workers and trade union militants and called for urgent action by the I.L.O. towards the liberation of detainees, a halt to repression and the re-establishment of trade union and civil freedom.

- A new complaint was lodged by the General Secretary of the W.C.L., Jean Brück, with the Director General of the I.L.O. against the Uruguayan government in connection with violation of trade union freedom in that country. The W.C.L., in a statement issued on the 28th of November 1973, denounced the fact that since the military coup d'Etat in June 1973, a large number of trade union leaders have been kept in prison without any of them being tried or specifically charged.

- On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, on the 10th of December 1973, the date on which the United Nations General Assembly took a solemn pledge to protect and extend the rights of man in civil, economic, social, political and cultural life, the W.C.L., whilst acknowledging the progress which has obviously been made with regard to the collective conscience of the people, said in an official press statement that there is much proof that there are still frequent, serious and repeated attacks on the basic rights of the individual and peoples as a whole.

- On 22nd November 1973, the Secretary General of the W.C.L., Jean Brück, appealed to Mr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary General of the United Nations' Organization, renewing previous proposals to abolish the death penalty for offences of political opinion. In fact, on several occasions, the W.C.L. has expressed the hope that the Secretary General of the United Nations' Organization take an appropriate initiative to obtain that a convention abolishing the death penalty for offences of political opinion, be established between the Member States of the U.N.O.

<u>The W.C.L. and the I.C.F.T.U. have published a joint press release</u>

Following the arrest of 16 Spanish trade unionists belonging to the clandestine trade union organization U.G.T. (Affiliated to the ICFTU), in the Canary Isles, the W.C.L. and the ICFTU, in a joint press release, denounced this new violation of trade union rights, imposed by the Franco dictatorship.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE FEDERATIONS

The International Federation of Christian Trade Unions of Salaried Employees, Technicians, Managerial Staff and Commercial Travellers, becomes the World Federation of Non-Manual Workers.

The International Confederation of Christian Organizations of salaried employees, Technicians, Managerial Staff and Commercial Travellers held an extraordinary Congress in Seebrun Haus, Wallersee (Austria) on 23rd and 24th October, 1973.

Two essential points were on the Agenda, in particular, the adaptation of the statutes with a view to undertaking activity on world and European level, and the problem of the orientation of the trade union movement in Europe.

With a view to extending the organization at world and European level, the Congress modified its statutes and adopted the title "World Organization of Non-Manual Workers.

The Congress confirmed the affiliation of the Federation to the World Confederation of Labour. Having discussed the very important problems involved in orientating the trade union movement in Europe, the Congress came out in favour of maintaining the European Organization of the W.C.L. and its own independence.

It however confirmed its willingness to cooperate with other trade union organizations and instructed the Executive to keep a close eye on the evolution of the trade union movement in Europe.

The Congress also stressed the fact that the World Organization of Non-Manual Workers should continue to try to find ways of acting on a world level.

The Congress elected G. Panis (Belgium) as successor to the departing Secretary General, J. Roisin.

The Latin American Federation of Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Leather (FLATEVECU).

The first Latin American Congress of workers in the textile, clothing, footwear and leather industries took place more than a year ago in Venezuela and this led to the creation of FLATEVECU. The priorities which the Federation was given have been satisfactorily achieved. The action which has been carried out will soon result in the organization, in Caracas, of the first National Venezuelan congress of workers in the sectors in question. Activities are particularly intense also in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Columbia and Peru, countries where National Federations are being formed as quickly as militants can be trained.

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AFRICA

Human dignity, employment and development were the main themes of the 4th Regional African Conference of the I.L.O. ' Nairobi November 27 - December 7, 1973.

The 4th Regional African Conference of the I.L.O. was held in Nairobi from November 27 to December 7, 1973. The following problems were on its agenda :

1. Human dignity, economic growth and social justice in the fast changing African continent.
2. Employment, status and conditions of migrant workers.
3. Promotion of a balanced rural and urban development.

The representatives of the governments, employers and workers of 40 countries took part in this conference, as well as the representatives of regional and international governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Council of the United Nations for Namibia was also represented, as well as the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA), the Liberation Movement of the Peoples of Angola (MPLA), the Revolutionary Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and the African Party for the Independance of Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC).

Within the framework of the struggle against apartheid and social discrimination, the Conference emphasized the right of all African workers to dignity and justice. This should determine all efforts of development, both at national and continental levels.

W.C.L. has always defended the concept of total and solidarian development of the peoples and thus contributed in a valuable way to the study of the means for achieving a harmonious development for the benefit of the most underprivileged rural masses of Africa, and not only for a small group of rich, who generally live in the cities.

Facing the deterioration of the terms of exchange of raw materials, which has been questioned recently by the so-called energy crisis the Conference stated that, a balance cannot be achieved through the mere increase of agricultural production or forced industrialization, according to the pattern of technically advanced countries.

The Conference demanded for migrant workers equal working and living conditions. As this problem is far from being solved at continental level, it will be discussed again at the next general conference of the I.L.O. (June 1974).

In order to implement all this, and on proposal of the trade-union organizations affiliated to the PAWC (regional organization of W.C.L. in Africa), the Conference studied the problem of social security in Africa and the need for harmonizing the existing regulations in the different countries of the continent. It also appealed to the African governments to ratify convention Nr 102, which is a required minimum in function of the degree of economic development and the available medical resources.

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LATIN AMERICA

Chile : The courageous action of the Swedish Ambassador

The Swedish Ambassador in Santiago, Mr Harald Edelstam, was declared person non grata yesterday by the Chilean military junta. Mr Edelstam, with the full support of his Government and of public opinion in Sweden, has played a leading role in the past three months in offering his embassy as a haven for innumerable political refugees, and in urging his diplomatic colleagues to do likewise.

Mr Edelstam was also the custodian of the former Cuban Embassy, which remained under Swedish control after the junta broke off diplomatic relations with Havana. Hundreds of refugees, many of them prominent figures in the Allende Government, have passed through his hands.

He had several clashes with the Chilean military authorities; the latest last week when he tried to prevent a Urugayan woman under his protection from being kidnapped by the army from a hospital. She was later released, and arrived in Stockholm yesterday.

Mr Edelstam, who is expected to leave the country as soon as possible, made no secret of his Government's dislike of the Chilean military regime, and Sweden would probably have suspended diplomatic relations with the junta were it not for the humanitarian work in which the Ambassador was engaged.

Curiously, Mr Edelstam had a comparable diplomatic experience when he was Ambassador in Djakarta at the time of the Right-wing coup in 1965.

Uruguay : More than 1,400 workers dismissed, thousands unemployed.

The workers' aspirations towards liberation and solidarity call for grave sacrifices. Thus, in Uruguay, workers who have gone on strike in protest against the coup d'état which swept away the most basic liberties in that country, are paying the price for their ideas of good citizenship and their belief in human values. By means of a decree issued on the 4th of July 1973, more than 1,400 workers from various companies were dismissed. In the iron and steel industry alone there were more than 300 dismissals.

Elsewhere, thousands of workers from the textile sector, laid off due to a shortage of raw materials, are in a terrible position. In Montevideo alone, unemployment in this sector has reached more than 2,000. The Congress of Textile Workers, which covers all workers in this branch of industry, has denounced the seizure of wool by the large distributors.

The Bordaberry dictatorship and the Uruguayan oligarchy have shown the real reasons for the recent coup d'état. It has simply been a question of breaking the working class movement. Almost all trade union leaders have been arrested, repression is as strong as ever and hunger and misery reign over the working classes.

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NORTH AMERICA

Canada : List of workers' disputes as on the 15th of November 1973.

The workers are fighting hard in Quebec. On the 15th of November 1973, there were 28 disputes going on, affecting 4,777 of which 2,959 belong to the CNTU (affiliated to the W.C.L.) from 18 unions, and 1,818 belong to the F.T.Q. (affiliated to the ICFTU) from 18 unions. We should like to mention in particular :

- 83 workers (CNTU) on strike for 8 months (since the 22.3.73), from "Canadian Gypsum" in Montreal;
- 93 workers (CNTU) on strike for 7 months (since the 8.5.73), from "Canadian Gypsum" in Joliette;

  (these are two subsidiaries of the giant "U.S. Gypsum", whose turnover amounts to 500 million dollars per year. The two branches in question are controlled from Chicago. Production is continuing with management staff and blacklegs working the factories, which are protected by the police);
- 135 workers (F.T.Q.) on strike for 8 months (since the 21.3.73), from Firestone in Joliette. This is a multinational company which has been making nett profits of 3,000 dollars per employee per year in Joliette. 150 management staff, with the support of about fifty security officers, police dogs and 150 S.Q. agents have managed to turn out 350,000 tyres since the strike began;
- 200 workers CNTU from "Great Lakes" in Berthier, who have been the victims of a lock-out for 3 months (since the 19.8.73). This company is a subsidiary of "Quebec Iron and Titanium" in which Kennecott has a 66.6 % ownership, the company involved in the drama in Chile;
- 100 workers (CNTU) from the Victoriaville abattoirs, who have been out of work for 4 months due to a lock-out (since the 16.7.73);
- 600 workers (F.T.Q.) who have been on strike since the 14.11.1973 from the "Reynold Aluminium" company in Cap-de-la-Madeleine;
- 350 workers (CNTU) from 43 food stores who have been on strike for one month (since the 12.10.73) from the food company "Provigo" in Sanguenay;
- 140 workers (CNTU) who have been on strike for 2 months (since the 18.9.73) from "Radio Quebec" in Montreal;
- 47 workers (F.T.Q.) on strike for 14 months (23.9.72) from the "Magasin Pollack) in Quebec;
- 30 workers (CNTU) on strike for 20 months (19.3.72) from the "Pavillon Saint-Dominique" in Quebec. After a 7 years struggle, the workers have still not managed to sign their first collective agreement;
- 36 workers (CNTU) on strike for a month (17.10.73) from the newspaper "La Voix de l'Est" in Granby. The strike here is in support of claims concerning safety at work, working conditions and wages in keeping with those of other papers. For example, the maximum salary offered in Granby is less than the minimum in Ottawa.

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Yet the list stretches on, so long and hard is the workers' struggle for liberation in Quebec. Prices in general have risen by 8.5 % over a year and by 14.3 % over two years, whilst food prices have risen by 16 % over a year and 27.3 % over two years. In addition, unemployment has reached a figure of 10 %, mass-production factories have closed down, war has been declared against the trade unions and concessions have been given to industry. The whole working class is having its throat cut by price increases because wages are not keeping pace with prices and taxes.

ASIA

The expansion of the W.C.L. in Asia : important BATU Congress

The 6th BATU Congress was held in Hong Kong from the 18th to the 20th of December 1973, where there were nearly a hundred delegates and observers representing trade union organizations from the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Thailand, Hong Kong and Sri Lanka, affiliated to the W.C.L., as well as representatives from Liaison groups from Japan, Malaysia and Singapore.

The W.C.L. was represented at the Congres by Jean Brück, the General Secretary, and Nguyen Van Tanh, Assistant General Secretary. The European Organization of the W.C.L. was represented by Jean Kulakowski, the General Secretary.

It took three days of intense work, a good deal of which was done in committees, before the 6th Congress could state the position of the BATU with regard to the problems of women workers, young workers, migrant workers, discuss and approve a programme of workers' education throughout Asia for 1974, draw up its exact policy with regard to trade union relations and determine its position with reference to the particular problem of development in the continent of Asia.

Congress also adopted several important resolutions :

A resolution on the petrol crisis, expressing the hope that there would soon be a solution to the Middle East conflict, condemning as being immoral and scandalous the embargo imposed by the multinational petrol companies to the detriment of the mass of workers and the development of the countries of the Third World and expressing the desire for the success of the Geneva conference.

A resolution on Indo-China, the Congress expressing its alarm at the worsening of the situation in Vietnam and calling on the International Supervisory Commission to make sure that the agreement signed in Paris in January 1973 is respected.

A resolution concerning the problem of apartheid, Congress calling on all Asian W.C.L./B.A.T.U. organizations to co-operate fully in the fight against apartheid, and giving its unqualified backing to the programme of action and the resolutions of the Pan African Trade Union Conference against Apartheid, which were adopted in Nairobi in December 1973.

A resolution concerning world population year, Congress requesting the rich countries to transfer the necessary resources for the development of the poor countries and to change the international economic system, particularly the monetary system and international trade.

Finally, an important resolution on trade union freedom in Asia, which the Congress considers as being one of the fundamental rights on man, equal to civil liberties and which it asks all the governments of Asia, to establish and respect. In particular, Congress appeals to the governments of Asia to ratify and put into effect conventions 87 and 98 of the I.L.O.

Following the adoption of these resolutions and work programmes, the 6th Congress enthusiastically approved the affiliation of several trade union organizations from various countries representing more than a quarter of a million members, expressing delight at the prospects of expansion now facing the BATU and the W.C.L. in many countries in Asia. It was decided to convoke an extraordinary congress during 1974 to carry out the necessary changes to the Statutes, the Organization and Working Methods following ten years of existence.

On the 20th of December, the last day of the Congress, there was a commemorative session for the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the BATU, where the duty of the delegates was again stated to be to develop fraternity between all colleagues fighting for the liberation of the workers and the peoples of Asia.

EUROPE

European Organization of the W.C.L. : Will the European programme for social action be weakened even further?

The Summit Conference between heads of State and Government leaders which took place in Paris in October 1972 stressed that it attached as much importance to vigorous action in the social field as to achieving Economic and Monetary Union. This Summit Conference called on the European Communities to decide on a programme for social action before the 1st of January 1974.

In order to enable this task to be carried out, the Ortoli Commission handed in a programme for social action to the Council on the 24th of October 1973.

The draft resolution contained in this programme was judged to be insufficient and too weak by the European Trade Union Movement, but it could be considered as the absolute minimum which the Trade Union Movement would accept.

If this document is weakened even further, the process of total European social integration would be made even more doubtful, in addition to the already precarious development of the European Communities.

The European Organization of the W.C.L. calls on the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs to adopt a positive and unambiguous position in this respect to make the social views of the European Community appear credible.

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The European Organization of the W.C.L. confirms its attitudes expressed to the Council, together with the proposals concerning the major social priorities.

In particular, the Organization emphasizes the need for the introduction of measures in all Member States to ensure the earning level of the workers is maintained in case of reconversion, together with the need for provisions to protect the workers' interests with particular reference to mergers, the concentration or rationalization of industry.

If the decisions taken by the Council of Ministers are incompatible with the spirit or the letter of the decisions of the Paris Summit Conference, the programme for social action would run the risk of losing its already limited attraction for the workers. In this case the confidence of the European Trade Union Movement in the orientation of the Community would be shaken even more.

England : Teachers' pay falls further behind the rest

Young teachers starting work now will take 10 years to reach the average pay of a manual worker, compared with six years in 1965 and nine years in 1972. Even for those with good degrees, the hope of rivalling the salary of non-manual worker has receded from seven years in 1965 and 11 in 1972 to "never" this year.

The claims were made by the National union of Teachers on the basis of a study carried out by the trade union research unit at Ruskin College, Oxford. They are likely to add salt to one of the profession's oldest wounds - the belief that teachers are worse paid than dustmen - on the eve of Burnham Committee salary negotiations.

The Ruskin figures are drawn from Government New Earnings Surveys until 1973. They show that a non-graduate teacher on the lowest pay scale in 1965 earned after six years work the average manual wage of 19.59 pounds. The same teacher reached the average non-manual wage after 13 years.

Vauxhall faces "Chrysler" row over wages

A repetition of the problems over electricians pay and conditions which ca[illegible] the recent strike, costing 40 millions pounds, at Chrysler could be faced shor[illegible]y by another American-owned car firm, Vauxhall Motors.

Electricians at the company's plant at Ellesmere Port have told the management there that they intend to seek a separate pay-and-conditions agreement, outside the joint bargaining machinery which at present covers not only electricians but members of the engineering and transport workers' union.

There are distinct parallels with the beginnings of the dispute at Chrysler which started when the 156 electricians at the company's plants in Coventry decided to seek a "staff status" agreement outside the terms and conditions negotiated by other unions.

Leaders of the 200 electricians at the Vauxhall plant in Cheshire are understood to have used the term "staff conditions" to describe their aspirations under a separate agreement. But there is little doubt that they are hoping to take a leaf out of the book of the Chrysler electricians who, ofter a strike lasting 14 weeks, emerged with a staff status agreement and a pay increase of 336 pounds a year.

The difference is that,while Chrysler negotiates its pay and conditions on a plant basis, Vauxhall bargains centrally on behalf of all its 28,000 employees. To enable a "staff conditions" agreement to be drawn up for all electricians, the Ellesmere Port electricians would have to persuade their colleagues at Vauxhall plants in Luton and Dunstable to support them.

If the electricians' union did decide to withdraw in favour of separate agreements for all its members at Vauxhall, the implications for the national bargaining machinery within the company would be serious.

Spain : The value of the export of labour.

According to official figures provided by the government itself, workers who have emigrated have brought in 206,364 million pesetas for the State from 1964 to 1972. Over the same period, the Spanish Institute of Emigration has invested 4,274 million pesetas in favour of those Spaniards who, forced away by misery, have emigrated to the rich countries of Europe, i.e. less than 2 % of the amount which this emigration has brought in. This vast difference is part of a whole philosophy, that of dictatorship : most wealth goes to the rich, a few "charitable" crumbs are thrown to the outcasts.

While Spaniards working abroad send their country the fruit of their efforts, the captains of international finance export to places far away from Spain the wealth which Spaniards produce in their own country. If this were not the case, there would not be a million emigrant Spaniards. But not only does the national oligarchy throw crumbs to the poor. In order to maintain the status quo, it continues to refuse the most basic liberties in Spain : the working classes are kept in a marginal situation; there are no official trade unions; the prisons swallow up any militant workers. That is why present-day Spain is the paradise of international capitalism !

France : The country was partially paralysed by the strike on 6th December 1973

The day of protest against rising prices which took place in France on 6th December, 1973 in response to the appeal by the trade unions COTT, CGT and FEN, as well as the leftist parties, was very widespread. The whole country was partially paralysed for twenty-four hours.

This day of protest involving millions of strikers, with its three hundred thousand people marching through the streets of Paris and the two million in the whole of France, was an undeniable success. The least that can be said is that the extent of popular discontent was brought out into the open and that wage-earners of all categories felt the need for action in order to make ready to take up the fight again.

Indeed, the rise in prices in France has assumed really unbearable proportions, proportions which were even more accentuated than in any other country of the European Common Market, More proof of this has just been provided by the Official Index for the month of October which shows a rise of 1.1 % (and 1.4% for food stuffs). Under these conditions therefore, it was a question for wage-earners to force the government to attack the real roots of inflation, the first consequence of which being non other than the depreciation of the buying power of the most under-privileged.

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Federal Republic of Germany : The energy crisis has provided a convenient pretext against the immigration of foreign workers.

What Switzerland did yesterday, West Germany does today. In the spring of 1971, the Swiss decided to ban the further expansion of their population of foreign workers - which still leaves them with 600,000 regulars and 196,000 foreign labourers operating on a seasonal basis. The West Germans have just followed suit, which leaves them with 2.6 m "guest workers" (who have with them 1.5m dependants) in a total work force of 26.4m. The Bonn ban has no time limit and does not, indeed cannot, affect workers from other E.E.C. countries.

The German argument is that the Arab oil embargo will no doubt cause the laying off of labour, and that jobs for Germans have to be protected. But in fact, for years past, there have been ministerial mutterings in Bonn that something would have to be done about the problem.

The energy crisis has provided a convenient pretext. The more than half a million Turks, followed in their hundreds of thousands by the Yugoslavs, Greeks, Italians and Spaniards, are a reproach to the Germans' conscience; they mostly live in the worst housing, in the most overcrowded industrial regions.

Those who are in Germany illegally, who may number as many as a quarter of a million, live most wretchedly of all, exploited without legal recourse by employer and by landlord (often of their own nationality). Even Germans are troubled when these conditions provide a breeding ground for political agitation, as was feared earlier this year when foreigners played a part in a strike at a car plan in Cologne.

One curb on the immigration of foreign workers had already been introduced by the government, which has seen the number of foreign workers double in the past four years. The "head-tax" on a foreign worker, payable by the employer, was recently trebled to DM 1,000. As a result, a mere 11,000 guest workers arrived in October. and in November, before the ban on November 23rd, only 6,000 came in. Employers of illegal immigrants are now threatened with prison.

Greece : The Purists

The new Greek regime which has just seized power is leaving no room for doubt with regard to its intentions. It is a new version of the military coup d'Etat which took place in 1967. The present leaders are no different, or differ only very slightly, from their predecessors. Everything is perfectly clear : Greek life is to be cleansed in every respect before democracy is restored. There is no question of normal electoral procedure returning or any steps being taken in this direction. In addition, the new regime will not tolerate any foreign interference at all. The regime and the regime alone will decide just when the people are sufficiently "educated" to live in a democratic manner.

The new President, General Gizikis, is better known as the military chief of the Athens area from 1967 to 1970 than as Commander of the Third Army, a position which he has held since 1970. It was in his capacity as Commander of the military area of Athens that he sent hundreds of citizens to the military tribunal in an attempt to do what he and his colleagues have now succeeded in doing : overthrowing Papadopoulos. He is known as "the executioner of Athens". This is certainly not far from the truth.

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Switzerland : Campaign for the equal distribution of cost of living subsidies.

The "Confédération Romande du Travail" (Confederation of Labour for French Switzerland - affiliated to the Swiss Confederation of Christian Trade Unions) is waging a campaign for the equal distribution of cost of living subsidies, a campaign which is fully justified. The question concerns a distribution of subsidies based on the price index.

The question they are asking is this : as this index is calculated on the basis of everyday products, bought and consumed by each and every family, why does the employer (State, Town, Commune) translate this into a percentage of earnings? Example : for an employee who earns 1,600 Francs per month, the allocation is 112 Francs; another employee who earns 3,200 Francs per month receives 224 Francs; a third employee on a monthly wage of 4,800 Francs gains 336 Francs per month. So far so good, 7 % on the basic salary - but there is a large difference between the actual amounts.

Since the consumption price index is based on the cost of goods which are not classed as luxury items in any way, it is unfair to give more to those who earn more and less to those who have less. The C.R.T. stresses the fact that the difference in Francs received by civil servants is growing ever greater, due mostly to the cost of living subsidies : 75 % of the basic wage over 12 years.

Turkey : Turks order inquiry into torture issue

Months of official silence on the explosive issue of the alleged torturing of political prisoners in Turkey ended on Saturday when the Prime Minister, Mr Talu, ordered the Ministers of the Interior and Defence to investigate the allegations urgently.

His action is the first major victory in a two-week-old campaign by the small Ankara left-wing daily newspaper, Yeni Halkci, to have the alleged tortures brought to justice.

So far the newspaper has published 13 sworn statements delivered to the courts by women in the period since the 1971 military coup, alleging ill-treatment ranging from simple threats to the use of the bastinado and electricity.

Many of the accounts make hair-raising reading and a gruesome strand of sexual sadism runs through most of them. Yeni Halkci has also published the names of many alleged torturers, though so far no action seems to have been taken against them by their superiors.

The Yeni Halkci reports accuse two organizations - the Turkish secret police, and a military "counter-guerrilla organization" whose existence has never been officially confirmed - of having taken the principal role in the alleged torturing.

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DOCUMENTS

AFTER "BRAZIL-EXPORT 1973"

In July 1973, the W.C.L. and its directly involved regional organizations, the CLAT (Latin America) and the EO/WCL, had already officially opposed "Brazil-Export 73" which was due to take place in Brussels from the 7th to the 15th of November 1973. There were many reasons for this hostility : they stem from the struggle to make Brazil a country where the "economic miracle" will benefit the whole of the population and not just international companies and a few thousand families. The XVIIIth Congress of the W.C.L. (Evian, 25-28 September 1973) stressed the fact that this "economic miracle" is the result of "the installation in Brazil of a large number of capitalist and multinational companies which, under the protection of a vicious police state, are for ever increasing their profits and practising the most terrible exploitation and forms of oppression, persecution, torture and even murder against all those fighting for justice and freedom"; that is why the Congress condemns "Brazil-Export 73" and supports the steps taken by the Belgian C.S.C. with regard to the government of this country to stop authorization being given for this exhibition to be held.

The Belgian government, in fact, did not prohibit the organization of "Brazil-Export" in Brussels, but considered that Belgium as a cross-road country, more than ever, and a free country, had no right to prohibit a commercial fair held by a foreign country because it served as propaganda for an dictatorial regime. On the other hand, the Belgian press as a whole informed the Belgian population on the realities in Brazil, as opposed to what has come to be known as the "Brazilian miracle".

Any force in Belgium which could be classed as popular and progressive expressed opposition with regard to "Brazil-Export 73". The C.S.C. (affiliated to the WCL) and the F.G.T.B. (affiliated to the ICFTU) met on the 5th November 1973 with the Belgian Press to denounce publicly the exhibition due to be held from the 7th to the 15th of the same month. More than 15,000 people from Belgium and neighbouring countries : Germany, Netherlands, France, Swiss, demonstrated in the streets of Brussels whilst the exhibition was actually being held as a show of sympathy with the Brazilian workers against the exhibition which to the vast majority of Belgians was simply a window display for an inhuman and odious regime.

The W.C.L. is proud of the results obtained : thanks to its action, in collaboration with popular forces centres, even if it was unsuccessful in stopping "Brazil-Export 73", for a whole country became aware and emotionally involved in what is happening in that vast country of 100 million inhabitants subjected to a reign of institutionalized violence.

The Brazilian government is content with the financial outcome of its "operation" and so are we because our efforts have brought results from the point of view of informing millions of workers in industrialized countries on the misery of the Third World countries.

Our action brought earth results : in spite of flat denials by the Brazilian government, millions of European workers are aware that Brazilian development is not of benefit to the people. On the contrary, inequality is on the increase and the poorest sectors of the community are becoming even poorer. Infant mortality rate rose from 6.9 % in 1960 to 8.38 % in 1969; rice production fell by 20 % in 1971. In the State of Sao Paulo, which is the richest and where the population is growing the fastest, the fall has been as high as 55 % for rice, 19.5 % for milk and 32 % for pork products during 1972.

Overall agricultural production has risen by 11.4 %, however, and Mr. de Moroes, the Brazilian Minister of Trade and Industry, stated in Brussels during a Press conference after "Brazil-Export", that his country intended to export to Europe - on condition that talks concerning tarifs with the Community result in the exporting of 2,500 metric tons of sugar.

Coffee production has risen by 120 % in 1972 (150 % in the State of Sao Paulo). But one must be aware that in Brazil the coffee plantation owners, receive a guaranteed price from the State. When prices fall in New York, when production, as in 1971, although increasing by 120 %, brings in less revenue than in 1970, too bad for the State, which settles payment by means of subsidies to the plantation owners and the destruction of stocks, and finally too bad for the population ! The people pay 30.7 % more for basic foodstuffs. In addition, if sugar is exported, the infant mortality rate will continue to increase even more but the Brazilian "economic miracle" will continue to be blazoned abroad to entice foreign investors to the feast.

However, even in the depths of this misery, however there are a few rays of hope. The working and peasant masses are becoming aware that the increased economic growth rate of the country is of no benefit to them. In a country where strikes are forbidden, several multinational companies have had strikes recently, including "Volkswagen", "Ford", "Chrysler", "Toyota". A go-slow by the dockers in the port of Santos lasted more than five months.

For the W.C.L. considers the struggle of the Brazilian workers as its own struggle : it will continue to give its support to all those who raise the standard in the cause of the misery of Brazilian workers and peasants against those who defend the flag of the "economic miracle", which benefits only the Brazilian oligarchy and international capitalism.

Solidarity and Liberation : these lines of principle for the W.C.L. action have never been more justifiable than in the case of the workers and peasants of Brazil!

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"THE MULTINATIONALS WHICH CONTROL US"

Christopher Tugendhat, who was one of the directors of the London "Financial Times", has written a remarkable book on the development and workings of the multinational companies. He describes how decisions are made and carried out country by country and case by case. He places the emphasis on the political implications of their attitudes and expresses the desire that their relations with governments be standardized. The French title of this book, published in Paris by Grasset is : "Ces multinationales qui nous gouvernent". The English edition was published in 1971 under the title of "The Multinationals", by Eyre and Spottiswoode.

The French title is no exaggeration. Governments are becoming concerned at the increasing power of the companies. In Belgium, for example, the Fédération Pétrolière belge, by virtue of the strength of the multinational companies which make up the federation, has just obtained permission from the government to increase the price of all petroleum products sold in Belgium. On the pretext of restrictions imposed by the Arab countries, the Belgian Petroleum Industry has obtained price increases which put up the value of its stocks by some three thousand million Belgian Francs and will result in even larger returns in the coming months.

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Before the victory of the multinational companies over the Belgian government with regard to petrol prices, was it not the case in Chile and we know with what results - battle between the Allende government and other multinational companies, Kennecott and I.T.T. in particular ? - The most powerful of them, are capable of threatening governments. The Fédération Pétrolière belge made no secret of the fact that if no price increase were granted the petrol shortage could be extended in Belgium. The harmonization of national interests and the interests of capitalism has become one of the major economic and political problems of this latter part of the 20th century.

In any case, the trade unions have joined battle against these many-tentacled organizations which by the effect of the concentration of power, put a large number of jobs in jeopardy.

The central theme of "The Multinationals"

The central idea of Christopher Tugendhat's book is that the moment has arrived for all governments throughout the world to take a close look at the problem of the large international companies which have sprung up during the course of the last twenty years. The emergence of these organizations is one of the most spectacular phenomena of our era and one which is not confined to economic and industrial fields : their presence seriously affects governmental action in carrying out duties and in dealings with other countries.

In the introduction to the book, Christopher Tugendhat gives us a table to make us all sit up and think :

Comparison between the sales figures of some multinational companies and the gross national product of some countries (1)

Gross national product 1971 (in 1,000M dol)		Sales figures 1971 (in 1,000M dol)		
Holland	37.19	General Motors	United States	28,26
Sweden	33.54	Standard Oil (N.J.)	U.S.A.	18,70
Belgium	29.12	Ford	U.S.A.	16,43
Switzerland	24.54	Royal Dutch/Shell	Holland/ U.K.	12.73
Denmark	17.39	I.B.M.	U.S.A.	8,27
Austria	16.50	Unilever	U.K./Holland	7,48
Norway	12.94	Philips	Holland	5,18
Finland	11.23	I.C.I.	United Kingdom	3,71
Greece	10.70	Hoechst	West Germany	3,48
Ireland	4.53	Alcan Aluminium	Canada	1,43

(1) The author has taken the figures from "Fortune", which publishes every year a list of the 1,000 largest companies in the United States and the 300 largest companies outside the United States. The figures for the G.N.P. have been taken from the O.E.C.D. publication "Principal Economic Indicators".

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As the table shows, some multinational companies already have an annual turnover equal to the gross national product of the smaller European countries and their growth rate is much higher.

I.B.M., Ford, Shell, Esso, General Motors, Agfa-Gevaert, Olivetti, Philips, Bayer everyone knows these fantastic empires, but few people, even specialists, are capable of giving exact figures concerning the scale of these multinational companies. Those available are always out-of-date and very approximative. Another problem is that accounting methods differ so much from one country to another that comparison is made extremely difficult. According to the author of "The Multinationals", the most complete data which has emerged to date is that published by the O.E.C.D. in 1968. This shows that in 1966 the amount of money invested by companies outside the native country was about 90,000 million dollars, two thirds of this amount being invested in the industrialized countries and the other third in the developing countries. In the industrialized nations, the manufacturing industry was in the lead with 28,000 million dollars, followed by the petroleum industry with 14,000 million dollars. It is estimated that the total has increased at a rate of 12 % per year and will now be (in 1971) more than 150 million dollars.

Nevertheless, however impressive these figures may be, they only give a very imperfect idea of the real size of this phenomenon. Christopher Tugendhat considers that the research carried out by Judd Polk in the "New world economy" (Columbia Journal of World Business, January-February 1968) indicates that each dollar invested and shown on a balance-sheet is translated each year into two dollars in turnover. According to this rough and ready method of calculation, the amount of production achieved by international companies outside the country of origin would be more than 300,000 million dollars in 1971, ie. more than the total amount of international trade.

"We have a special nationality"

It would be a mistake to look at these companies according to traditional national criteria. By taking an extract from a statement made during talks on "the multinational company" organized by the British Institute of Management on the 10th of July 1968, the author describes the attitude of these companies in the words used by Dr. Max Gloor, director of the Swiss company "Nestlé Alimentation" : "We cannot be considered as being either purely Swiss or purely multinational, that is to say belonging to the whole world, if indeed such a state could exist. We are probably somewhere in between, a race apart. In a word, we have a special nationality, a Nestlé nationality".

Each company operates as a body managed and co-ordinated from a central point. Sometimes the different branches are given large scope for initiative, sometimes they are not. However, whatever formula is used at any given moment, the company headquarters represent the brain and central nervous system, whilst the branches are only the limbs carrying out the duties given to them. I.B.M., for example, do not manufacture a complete computer anywhere outside the United States; they have the components made in different countries and then assembled to give a multinational finished product. "Ford" tend to co-ordinate the activities of the English, Belgian and German branches just as strictly as these firms co-ordinate their own factories. "S.K.F." send out orders to their various branches in accordance with the needs of each in such a way as to ensure a more or less uniform level of activity throughout the group. The role of the branches of these companies, as of all multinational companies, is to operate as the arms and legs of a human body in working for the body as a whole and their interests are subordinate to this aim. The result is that they operate in accordance with the desires of the

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headquarters. The links created by these companies between nations, by virtue of the co-ordination of activities in the various countries involved are not immediately noticeable as in the case of treaties agreed between nations, but they are no less strong and durable.

The managers of the multinationals

The characteristics of the multinational companies have an influence on those who run them. W.J. Kenyon Jones, the Chairman of the British subsidiary of the American firm "Ronson" describes the duties of a manager in brutal terms. He must renounce any nationalistic attitude and accept that in the last resort his loyalties lie with the shareholders of the mother company and he must protect their interests even if this does not appear to coincide with the national interests of the country in which he is working.

It is Kenyon Jones again who puts his finger on the vital points. The international companies can put pressure on the international exchange rates by transferring funds from one place to another and they can also influence the balance of payments by altering the prices at which products are released by one subsidiary to another. They can switch export orders from one country to another and can have a great influence on national growth rates by investing in factories and equipment in one place in preference to another. Any one of these decisions carries a choice involving national interests.

The companies and world trade

The part played in world commerce by trade between the subsidiaries of the multinational companies in different countries is one of the most striking examples of the influence which these societies have over national economic policies. In an analysis of British trade in 1966 which appeared in the "Board of Trade Journal" on the 16th of August 1968, the Board of Trade stated that 322 % of British exports in terms of value were the result of "transactions between related companies." This term covers all sales made from Great Britain by the branch of an international company, be it British or foreign in origin, to a subsidiary abroad. One delivery from Ford Great Britain to Ford Belgium and another from the Imperial Chemical Industries Great Britain to Imperial Chemical Industries West Germany are just two examples of the type of transaction in question. This study by the Board of Trade shows that one of the most striking aspects of the activities of companies in Great Britain under American control is that their main trading partners overseas are sister companies. In 1966, 56 % of their total exports went to subsidiaries of the same company, whilst the corresponding percentage for other foreign owned companies was 35 % and for British companies 27 %. No statistics of a similar nature have yet been published for imports, but there is every reason to believe that the proportion of imports resulting from internal transactions by international companies is at least as great as that for exports.

The only information which can compare in any way comes from the United States ("Survey of Current Business", November 1966) and this is not recent. According to the Department of Commerce (same source), sales made by international companies with their headquarters in the United States to subsidiaries abroad represented in 1964 about 25 % of all American exports. In 1969, the same department published complementary figures for 1965, covering the activities of 320 companies having total exports of 8,500 million dollars. They show that more than half of the foreign sales of these companies were made through their own subsidiaries. Not only would the figures be much higher today than at that time, but also, by virtue of the rapid expansion in American investment abroad since the mid-1960's it can be stated that the level of internal transactions by these companies with reference to the American balance of payments will also have risen.

The majority of other countries do not publish statistics of this sort with regard to external trade. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the international companies play an even greater role in the smaller European countries than in Great Britain and the American professor, Jack .. Behrman claims that in one year trade in both directions between Ford factories in Belgium and West Germany represented approximately one sixth of the total of Belgian imports and exports.

The problem of transferring finances

The most frequent reason for discussion and dispute between the multinational companies and public authorities is the facility which the former are granted to move enormous sums of money between subsidiaries in different countries. Prince Colonna di Paliano, the ex-commissioner for industry with the European Economic Community considered that in 1970 the liquid assets of the companies and banks of American origin working on an international scale were 30 or 35 thousand million dollars ie. three times the official reserves of the United States, without even considering the large amounts also held by companies not of American origin. "However", he went on to say, "this money is rolling continuously in gigantic waves from one country to another".

The fact that these activities transcend national boundaries presents the various governments with special problems. If they were carried out within the framework of a single economic system, it would be possible to keep track of them, supervise them and publish information on them in a systematic manner. In a world of independent nations, each with its own laws, concepts and interests, this is impossible.

In financial matters, the main worry of these companies working on an international scale is that they may lose their money due to factors beyond their control. They are afraid of restrictions which governments may impose on the repatriation of profits of a subsidiary by the mother company and the dangers of a modification of exchange parities are also a cause of constant enxiety to them.

Certain companies consider that the best way of protecting themselves against these risks is to prevent their subsidiaries from accumulating excess liquidity from profits. A survey carried out in 1967 on the means used by thirty American companies with subsidiaries in Europe to transfer funds shows that one sixth of them ordered their subsidiaries to send back to the mother company every year between 90 % and 100 % of their profits. A survey (1) on the activities of 115 foreign subsidiaries in Great Britain, published in 1970, shows a similar tendency. Between 1960 and 1967, 13 % of these companies sent more than 90 % and a quarter more than 70 % of their profits to the mother company.

The aim of "The Multinationals" by Christopher Tugendhat was to show that increasing tension exists between companies and governments. The author considers that the time has come for governments throughout the world to adopt a clear position on the problem of the multinationals which are beginning to look more and more like private international governments. We are at present at the stage of collecting and interpreting information and that Christopher Tugendhat's book will have made a significant contribution to bringing to light the importance and urgency of the problem.

(1) Dr. Michael Q. Brooke and Dr. H. Lee Remmers : "The Strategy of Multinational Enterprises".

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THE FIVE WEEK STRIKE AT AKZO-FABELTA, TUBIZE (BELGIUM)

Once again, the multinationals are in the news. In a recent number of Labor (N° 2,3, 4 - 1973, p. 231 - 232), we drew attention to the dismissals which had occurred at GENESCO. This same group (U.S.A. 120,000 workers) has just decided to shut down the "Marlyn Formcraft" company in Ypres (Belgium), in addition to three branches in Holland.

The AKZO group is also in the news again following a 5 week strike (from the 8th of October to the 6th of November 1973) by 700 workers at FABELTA - TUBIZE (Belgium), in support of an unsettled pay claim, a demand for a 13th week and an increase in bonus payments. An agreement was signed on the 6th of November and, thanks to the unity and determination of the workers, their demands were met to a large extent.

However, there are many lessons to be learned from this dispute. This has been done for us by the C.S.C. (the majority trade union at the company, affiliated to the W.C.L.) :

1. <u>The unknown person of the multinational companies - the boss</u>

Where do you find the proper spokesman? It is surprising to discover that there is nobody with the power to enter into negotiations. On the other hand, we cannot fail to notice the abuse of power by the multinational companies, particularly when the decision-making centre is in another country.

Faced with this "Unknown boss" of the multinationals, the State must protect its citizens and not abandon the workers who become the playthings of the international capitalists, at the very time when the multinational companies are requesting and obtaining large subsidies from the State.

2. <u>The State must protect the workers under the law</u>

Most of the time, the politicians of this country favour the multinationals because, supposedly, they promise new employment.

What are the facts, however? At AKZO Fabelta we have lost 1,500 jobs in 3 years, whilst in Belgium alone, this company has received subsidies amounting to 900 million BF. Are jobs necessary at any price? Even when these companies make the citizens of this country pay dearly for them? Can this excuse our politicians from their responsibilities for creating more stable employment by thinking out and proposing plans for which they were elected?

The State must bring in legislation in 3 fields. The first is to stop the multinationals from bleeding the country and the best way to do this is to participate in the capital resources of these companies and not just give away money with promises !

The second is to control the financial speculation practised by these companies and put an end to their tax frauds.

The third field is that of forcing these companies to indicate clearly just who is responsible for them.

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3. *A new trade union strategy must be drawn up*

What has been shown throughout this strike is that one must take other than legal measures to get a hearing....

Angry workers found themselves obliged to kidnap the director general for 2 hours in order to make their voices heard.

Trade union strategy must be radically changed on the national and international level faced with these multinational companies.

AKZO, as is the case with the majority of these kinds of firms, can be found almost everywhere in the world, including Brazil.

The experience of 5 weeks on strike teaches men who have to face fresh problems every day to appreciate one another and they end up by realising that the only enemy is capitalism.

The altruism of the workers in their fight is the greatest weapon against capitalism. This altruism develops even better within the common trade union front.

The reflections of our comrades at Fabelta are in complete agreement with the analyses and conclusions of the W.C.L. during the Evian congress. In order to create better co-ordination or considerably improve the present relations between the various forces and bring about effective solidarity between all workers, it is essential to :

- *give an international dimension to trade and inter-trade action;*
- *give this action an anti-capitalist aspect;*
- *begin or speed up processes of unification in order to give the trade unions adequate tools to deal with the situations in which workers find themselves.*

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN "BANTUSTAN" POLICY : A UTOPIA AND A SWINDLE.

Racialist propaganda from South Africa has often told us of the "Bantustan policy". According to this propaganda, the creation of the "Bantustans" is a step towards self-government by the Africans. But what, in fact, do the "Bantustans" consist of?

According to a document written by Professor Leslie Rubin, from Howard University in Washington, for the Apartheid Group of the Department of Political Affairs and Security Council Affairs of the United Nations, the "Bantustans" created in the African reserves in South Africa and, more recently, in the Namibi Desert, are the result of the policy of "separate development", which is only another term for the despicable policy of Apartheid. Basically, it is merely a question of cheap African labour reserves.

In any case, the United Nations have rejected the claims by the South African government that the creation of the "Bantustans" is a step towards self-government. In a resolution passed on the 8th of December 1970, the United Nations General Assembly condemned the creation (by the South African government) of "Bantustans" in the self-styled African reserves as an illegal step violating the principles of self-government and damaging the territorial integrity of the State and the unity of the people.

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The Nationalist Party came to power in South African in 1948 thanks to a new policy of separate development for non-whites. The African population was promised that it would be free to develop in its own regions, the old "reserves" or "autochtonous zones", at present called "Bantu zones", the term "Bantu" being used by the South African government to signify the African population of the country.

The Bantu zones cover several areas of land of varying surface area, separated from each other by areas which are the domain of the White Man and spread throughout the country. The total surface area of these lands is at present 12 % of the total area of South Africa.

In 1913, the "Native Lands Act", gave the Africans exclusive right to the lands they owned at the time. It was stipulated that further lands would be given to them and, in 1936, the "Native Land and Trust Act" provided for the concession of an extra number of "freed zones". Only a few of these zones were handed over to the Africans. Once the Government meets its obligations with regard to the 1936 Act, the Bantu zones will cover 16,400,000 hectares or thereabouts, 13.7 % of the total area of South Africa. These lands will be the exclusive property of 15 million Africans. They will never own any more : the government has stated on many occasions that it is not prepared to grant further land. The remaining 86.7 % of land - whose surface area will never be reduced - will belong exclusively to 4 million Whites.

How the "Bantustans" came to be created.

The 1951 "Bantus Authorities Act" created the machinery to allow Africans to exercise their political rights in their own regions. This Act was drawn up specifically to counteract the effects of modernization in South Africa by recreating the tribal system among Africans. According to the provisions of this Act, all Africans (including the large number who had been living in the major towns for three generations and consequently had no tribal identity) would only be able to express their political opinions through tribal institutions and representatives.

The Act established a hierarchy of tribal bodies from the Tribal Authority at the lowest level, through the grades of District and Regional Authorities to that of Territorial Authority at the highest level. The Tribal Authority is comprised of a leader or "chief" and a certain number of counsellors, all nominated and never elected; the White minister charged with Bantu administration and development can at any moment depose the chief and cancel the appointment of a counsellor.

After a violent resistance, which lasted for 10 years, the government, by using simultaneously its arbitrary political powers, military force and promises, to obtain the collaboration of the chiefs, succeeded in bringing into effect the Bantus Authority system.

The project for the separate development of Africans is contained in the "Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act" of 1959, which was to ensure the progressive development of independent groups of Bantu nationality.

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A few facts concerning the first Bantustans

In 1962 the government announced that it would grant independence to the national X'Bosa group whose Territorial Authority had been established in Transkei. In 1963, the "Transkei Constitution Act" was passed and the first Bantustan appeared.

According to the Transkei Act, Transkei is an "autonomous territory within the South African Republic". Things did not turn out like this however. We find instead that :

- The powers granted by the Constitution do not cover all the traditional Transkei territories. Umtata, for instance, the administrative capital of the Transkeian Territories, was not included, together with Port St. Johns, the only Transkeian port;
- The composition of the Legislative Assembly is such that power in effect belongs entirely to White South Africa. The Assembly is composed of 64 chiefs and 45 members. All the chiefs are paid, appointed and may be removed at any time by the South African government : between 1955 and 1958, 34 chiefs were deposed by the government;
- The powers of the Assembly are strictly limited and it cannot refuse entry to the South African police or have any control over the police once they are in the territory;
- Transkei is at all times under the absolute and immediate control of the South African government; no Law passed by the Transkeian Assembly, even on matters within its own competence, may come into force unless it is approved by the President of South Africa.

Two general elections have taken place in Transkei. To judge just how much they really meant, it is enough to look at the emergency regulations passed in 1960 to keep opponents of the "Bantu Authorities" system in check. These regulations, the majority of which are still in force, stated in particular that :

- it is forbidden for more than 10 Africans to meet without authorization;
- persons violating these regulations (or merely suspected of intending to do so) can be arrested without a warrant and imprisoned for an indefinite period of time;
- anyone may be refused entry into Transkei, may be forbidden to be there or to leave : the maximum sentence is a fine of 1,280 Rand or three years in goal or both.

Another factor to discourage any would be opponent to the policies approved by the government is that Transkei is subject to all the police laws of South Africa, such as suspension of residence rights, banishment and supervised residence.

What is the position in the first "Bantustan"?

After several years of "autonomy", Transkei can only guarantee employment to a handful of inhabitants whilst the vast majority continues to work in the mines, factories and working of White South Africa :

- more than 60 % of the available labour force is in the form of migrant workers in White South Africa;
- in 1968, the number of workers recruited was 150,000; in 1969 it had reached 174,000;
- a report from the South African Home Office for 1967 and 1968 revealed that out of 1,579,000 Africans living in Transkei, only 41,000 had a job;

- the frightening level of unemployment in Transkei is aggravated by the fact that men are dragged forcibly from their homes and jobs in White South Africa to be installed in so-called homes in Transkei where there are no jobs available.

The above describes in brief the situation in the first "Bantustan" after 25 years of Apartheid. The outcome is as follows :

- economic stagnation and poverty are the order of the day in Transkei; the annual income per inhabitant is 48 dollars of which only 36 is actual money in the hand;
- social instability, poor levels of public health standards, high infant mortality rate : in 1970, Professor Reid, the well-known authority on malnutrition, drew attention to the scandalous position in all the Bantu zones, including Transkei : he calculates that in a typical Bantu zone, half of the children die before the age of 5 years;
- Transkeian inhabitants continue to come more and more under the direct control of White South Africa.

On the 5th of December 1970, the Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking at a Press conference after a three week trip to South Africa, stated that one should have no illusions with regard to the so-called growth in independence of the "homelands" (Bantustan). He added that the Transkei Parliament is merely a sham, that police informers from the "Special Branch" (secret police) are operating in the homelands.

In the same year, 1970, Leo Marquard wrote in the "The Peoples and Policies of South Africa" publication that the whole of the Bantu zones are areas of misery incapable of bearing the periodic South African droughts and floods or of meeting the needs of the existing population : they are nothing more than vast rural slums where the main export is labour, the men going to work in the mines, workings and factories run by the Whites to earn just enough money to pay their taxes and support their families back in the Bantu zones.

The views of the W.C.L.

When closely examined, this policy of "Bantustans", as we said at the beginning, is just another way of describing the despicable policy of Apartheid and is a mixture of utopia and swindle, with the latter more in evidence. Indeed the deceit of the racialist South African Government is revealed in the official statements that this policy offers the Africans total freedom and independence to develop their own territories.

As far as the W.C.L. is concerned, it will not cease to denounce Apartheid and suggest alternative solutions. The W.C.L. is fully aware, however, that it is vain to hope that simple resolutions will effectively solve these problems. What is needed is concerted action by the workers throughout the world. This is why the W.C.L. was at the origin of an International Trade Union Conference against Apartheid which took place at Geneva on 15 and 16 June 1973, and in which took part 380 delegates representing more than 200 trade union organizations from all over the world and that is also why during its Congress in Evian (September 1973) asked all affiliated organizations to draw up at national, continental and world level, a "trade union Committee against Apartheid" and racial and colonial regimes, to wage a joint campaign against the scourge of humanity, of which our African brothers are the victims.

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SPECIAL

THE W.C.L. AND THE I.C.F.T.U. HAD A JOINT MEETING WITH MR. PHILIPPE DE SEYNES, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, TO DISCUSS "MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES".

On 11th and 12th January 1974, the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations for economic and social questions, Mr. Philippe de Seynes, met in Brussels the representatives of the W.C.L. and the ICFTU and the main international trade federations , to discuss the position of the democratic trade union movement with regard to multinational companies.

This meeting with the U.N.O. delegation, headed by Mr. de Seynes, is particulary important. In fact, the W.C.L. and the ICFTU had refused last October to meet the group of "eminent persons", appointed by the United Nations to study the effects of multinational companies on the process of development and on international relations because this group included no members from the international trade union movement. This meeting with the United Nations delegation enabled the W.C.L. and the ICFTU representatives and several other professional organizations to express their anxiety and claims concerning rules to govern the activity of multinational companies. Mr. de Seynes, agreed with his speakers to organize permanent talks between the United Nations and the international trade union movement and to have regular contacts for a mutual exchange of information. It was agreed that the trade union positions and claims concerning rules governing the activity of multinational companies would be communicated to the United Nations, independently of the report from the group of "eminent persons".

Our readers will find an article under the section on "Documents" of the next issue of the bulletin, concerning the Declaration made by the World Confederation of Labour to the U.N.O. delegation during this important meeting of 11th and 12th January.